

A Primary School ASSEMBLY





A Primary School ASSEMBLY FOR THY KINGDOM COME

Thy Kingdom Come resources for Schools

Collective worship in school provides a vital opportunity for children and young people to pause and reflect on important issues of life and faith. Prayer is a central part of worship and in church schools it underpins the whole ethos and life of the school.

Church schools do not simply educate children and young people from Christian family backgrounds but are there to serve the communities in which they are situated. Our school communities offer great diversity and vitality; welcoming those of all faiths and none. Christian worship in our schools is therefore invitational and school leaders meet the challenge of leading collective worship within their diverse communities in many creative and innovative ways.

In offering resources for schools to use as part of 'Thy Kingdom Come' we have suggested material relating specifically to the Lord's Prayer and ideas for creating opportunity and space for children and young people to pray in school or in church as is most appropriate for the school's context. These resources can be used in collective worship settings open to the whole school community. Schools also offer extra-curricula activities, clubs and groups which will consider using the other resources available in the pack.

Further information on *Thy Kingdom Come*, including resources and local events will be found at: www.thykingdom.co.uk

Every Language under the Sun

BACKGROUND NOTES

- 2000 years ago, on a hillside above the Sea of Galilee, Jesus of Nazareth was asked by his followers for instructions on how to pray. In response, Jesus recited a short prayer in his native Aramaic. The original form of the Lord's Prayer was succinct, fewer than two dozen words.
- Some fifty years later this prayer was recorded in Greek in Luke's Gospel in the Bible (11:2-4) and also by Matthew (6:9-13); his longer version became the standard prayer. At the time Greek was the Western vernacular, the language of commerce.
- Before long the Western churches were centred on Rome and Latin became almost exclusively the language of worship and study. From c400 to 1500 AD, the Vulgate (St Jerome's Latin translation of the original Hebrew / Greek Bible) was the most influential text in European society and the only Bible most Christians ever met.
- The Lord's Prayer was learnt for centuries, even by the most ordinary Christians, in Latin and the prayer was referred to by its first two Latin words: Pater noster.
- Today tourists and pilgrims on a trip to Israel visit the Church of the Pater Noster which stands on the traditional site in Jerusalem where Jesus taught his disciples the Lord's Prayer. It is particularly famous for a series of wall plaques made out of ceramic tiles. Each of these is decorated, according to the local Armenian tradition of painting on tiles, with the Lord's Prayer in a different language.
- The present church and its cloister were completed in 1874 by an Italian woman, Aurélie de Bossi, who was the widow of a French prince. Later she added a convent for Carmelite Sisters alongside the church. The princess had a particular devotion to the Lord's Prayer and erected translations of the prayer in 39 different languages.
- Among dozens of languages on view in the vaulted cloister are Icelandic, Hebrew, Spanish, Guarani, Maltese, Tagalog and Ojibway. Many panels can be seen on the internet and make a good focus for this assembly.
- www.christusrex.org collects copies of the Lord's Prayer written, said and sung in hundreds of languages. At the time of writing, the website holds the prayer in more than 1600 languages and dialects.
- The Lord's Prayer Project CD (see Resources) contains recordings of parents and school children in Ipswich singing the Lord's Prayer in many versions and examples of the Lord's Prayer said in their home languages. See Resources. You may have local families who can help say the prayer in their own home or heart language.
- 'Amen' is a Hebrew word meaning 'so be it' or 'I agree'. It is usually used without translation and many Christians may be unaware of its origins, simply using it as the closing word to their prayers. It is a word also used by the Jewish and Muslim communities.



Collecting what you need

This will vary according to what you select for your assembly:

- Large firm piece of card, at least 130cm x 75cm – rough sizing of Lord's Prayers at Church of the Pater Noster, Jerusalem
- Pictures to project of tiles at Paternoster Church - source from the internet – show at least one which gives an indication of size.
- A large globe
- A pupil dressed up as a princess and a posh chair to sit on! The child to be the princess can be chosen as pupils arrive or briefed earlier. Costume can be a simple shiny head-dress or the full gear!
- Bible and a pupil to read. Put book marker in at Luke 11:1-4.
- Examples of the Lord's Prayer spoken in different languages – on CD – or spoken by visitors, children, members of staff
- A4 paper to give out at end of assembly
- A version of the Lord's Prayer in song to project / music to play
- Lord's Prayer words in version you use, or intend to use, in school
- Reflection / prayer candle and matches

Preparing the space

- To one side, balance the large piece of card. When they arrive, invite two children to sit with it and hold the card up at the right time.
- To the other side, place a posh chair and invite your princess to sit somewhere at the back or in the 'wings', ready to come in later.
- Set up worship table or place candle and matches in safe place. Add the globe and a copy of the Lord's Prayer.
- Organise other resources as best suits the space.
- Decide where choir will sit or organise pupils to work projector and music.



Gathering

Choose what is appropriate:

- Play a Lord's Prayer song – see Resources. Encourage children to sing / listen as they arrive.
- Invite an older class to sing a Lord's Prayer song as other children arrive and encourage other children to join in or to hum along.
- Greet everyone in your normal fashion e.g. Peace be with you / and also with you.

Engaging

- Ask the children with the card to hold it up. Say thank you in as many languages as you can manage. See if anyone can add more ways of saying thank you.
- Introduce 'Princess Aurelie'. Over 150 years ago, this French princess, who'd been born in Italy, moved to Israel. She started her own collection of special words in different languages. She had a good start with French and Italian. (Princess to come to the front to a throne-like chair).
- The princess had her favourite words painted onto beautiful ceramic tiles with flowers around the edge - an Armenian style. She had 39 copies of her favourite words made, 39 different languages. Each copy was as big as this piece of card. Point to the card again. (Princess to wander over and admire!)
- See if you can work out what the words are. (Show some copies of the tiles but not an English version.) They are the words Jesus taught his disciples when they asked him how to pray. (Ask Princess to sit on posh chair and invite another child to stand behind her and read from a Bible: Luke 11:1-4.)
- Tourists from all over the world visit the tiles today; at the spot where Jesus taught the prayer to his disciples. And today there are even more languages. The princess believed these were the words of God's Son, Jesus. She repeated them many times every day. She wanted everyone to know the words and she wanted everyone to know about Jesus.

- Beginning today (Ascension Day) and ending in ten days at Pentecost, lots of Christians just like the Princess Aurelie, are beginning ten days of special prayers for people to come to know Jesus. It is a project called *Thy Kingdom Come*, which are words from the Lord's Prayer.

Tell pupils about any local events, or anything the school is putting on e.g. a special prayer station, or prayer space.

- Maybe you can say the whole prayer yourself in English, maybe not yet, but you can probably all say a bit of it in another language. Amen – it's Hebrew and it means 'I agree'.

Responding

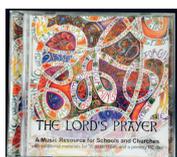
Light a candle by a copy of the Lord's Prayer and a globe. Say: *There are nearly 7000 languages in the world. Christians across the globe will be praying for other people during 'Thy Kingdom come'.*

Reflect: Christians believe God understands every language and every prayer. Who would you like to pray for?

Prayer: Ask the 'princess' to read the Lord's Prayer in English. *Invite children / adults who can say the prayer in another language to say it too.*

Sending

- Offer pieces of A4 paper for children to find and write out different language Lord's Prayers and create a display in school.
- Sing a version of the Lord's Prayer that children know or that they can simply join in e.g. the Caribbean version.
- Say the grace or other appropriate prayer and then blow candle out. Put a Lord's Prayer song back on as children leave.



This assembly was based on one from the *Lord's Prayer Project CD* published by St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocese, and is used by permission. **See Resources.**

You will find a number of Lord's Prayer songs easily available for schools:

- Our Father (Caribbean Lord's Prayer) www.worshipworkshop.org.uk/songs-and-hymns/hymns/our-father,-who-is-in-heaven/
- Cliff Richard's Millennium Prayer – downloadable in many versions on the internet
- The Lord's Prayer (Songs for Every Healthy, Happy School - Out of the Ark Music) www.outoftheark.co.uk/
- The Lord's Prayer Project CD (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocese) See below.
- The Lord's Prayer – a modern up-tempo version by Andy and Wendy Rayner, downloadable, with music score too <http://schoolsongs.org.uk/web/index.php/themed-songs>

Schools may be interested in following up *Thy Kingdom Come* with a whole school RE day based on the Lord's Prayer. Local churches may be happy to set up the prayer stations as their contribution.

The Lord's Prayer Project is a Music and RE Resource for primary schools which includes:

- 10 versions of the Lord's Prayer sung by Suffolk schoolchildren, plus backing tracks, words and music.
- 30 Lord's Prayer assemblies, including a series introducing all the different songs.
- a complete Primary School RE day with work for each year group from EYFS to Y6.
- beautiful artwork, a reflective story, BSL signs for the Lord's Prayer and examples of the Lord's Prayer spoken in different languages



The CD can be obtained for £15 plus £1.50 p and p from St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocese. Purchase of the CD supports Ngara Anglican Primary School in Kagera Diocese, Tanzania. Email: Jacqui.studd@cofesuffolk.org

This assembly resource was based on one from the *Lord's Prayer Project CD* published by St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocese, and is used by permission. helen.matter@cofesuffolk.org | Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich